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153CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP
INTELLIGENCE REPORTCOUNTRY Yugoslavia
SUBJECT Armored Unit Tactics

DATE: 25X1X

DIST. 11
2 September 1947

PAGES 4

25X1X

Types of Units

1. The types of armored units most frequently found are the heavy armored brigade, the armored brigade, and the assault artillery group.
 - a. The heavy armored brigade is directly subordinate to the high command of the front and is only temporarily placed under an army, a corps or a division. These brigades are equipped with heavy tanks of the JS (Josef Stalin) type. The brigade always enters into combat as a complete unit and under the personal command of the commander. It is in radio contact with other tank units as well as with the commander of the troops in the area where the brigade is operating. The area commander orders the time and place of attack, but the details of the operation are left to the discretion of the brigade commander. After the initial break-through the regular armored brigades are thrown into the breach to be followed by the motorized infantry and the regular infantry. The heavy armored brigade retires to the rear where it remains to await movement to a new sector.
 - b. The armored brigade is equipped with T-34 tanks which can carry 30 men. If the tanks meet resistance, part of the crew dismount and prevent the enemy infantrymen from approaching the tank. Those crewmen who remain in the tank fire in the direction of the objective. When the advance has been accomplished, a combined attack of infantry and tanks is begun.
 - c. The artillery assault groups, which are mobile artillery units, are organized to create a base of fire in the front line from which to bombard enemy positions in support of the armored units.

Combat Tactics of Armored Units

2. In the preparation of combat plans for an infantry battalion, reinforced by tanks and assault artillery on an open terrain, it is necessary to take into account the following points:
 - a. Tanks operate about 200 meters in front of the infantry. Their task is to annihilate the enemy force and to attack the enemy's sources of fire by tank fire and by encirclement and flanking maneuvers.

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- 2 -

- b. The assault artillery pieces move along with the infantry and knock out the sources of enemy fire which hinder the infantry's advance.
3. If the battalion is reinforced by assault artillery only, that artillery must support the infantry by fire, knock out the enemy force, as well as liquidate the sources of enemy fire which hinder the infantry's advance.
4. During attacks on wooded terrain, the tanks or the assault artillery operate in smaller groups in close association with the infantry and under the watchful protection of the infantry. Good marksmen equipped with automatic arms ought to be placed at the disposal of the men as protection.
5. When the sources of enemy fire, which have impeded the infantry's advance have been discovered, the tanks and the assault artillery advance and knock out these nests. In certain cases, especially when there are open passages within the forest, the tanks can move in front of their infantry in order to clear the way and for observation and firing purposes.
6. At the beginning of an attack the tanks advance in the form of a chain with the light tanks at the head to discover the position of the enemy's anti-tank guns. Later the tanks will have to advance more cautiously. If a break-through is achieved, attention must be given to the expected direction of the counter-attack. In preparation two or three tanks should be placed on the flanks of the break-through in order to guard against the counter-attack. As a rule the break-through is extended in the form of a long and narrow angle which is gradually widened by other tanks and infantry. The Russians quickly entrench themselves and their tanks in the terrain.
7. After considerable losses during the war the Russians became more prudent and often kept their tanks in the rear as a support to the infantry and to serve as a base of fire. Often too, the assault artillery is used as a mobile base of fire, especially after a break-through by the tanks.

Anti-Tank Defense

8. Effect of various arms on armored vehicles. Light artillery pieces are not effective against the armor of the new models, although a few lucky shots may have a considerable effect if fired at sensitive points, such as the periscope, the slits for the guns of the tank, the wheels, etc. Light grenades are very effective against the infantry in the tanks. If the grenade is thrown somewhat vertically against the roof or the floor (when the tank is turned upside down or in the process of going over obstacles), it will have considerable effect.
 - a. The 72.6 mm artillery gun is an excellent anti-tank piece which pierces even modern armor except in the specially reinforced places. The best hit is a vertical one. The gun, however, is a little too heavy which makes it difficult to change position and gain tactical mobility.
 - b. Trench mortars are an excellent weapon for short distance combat (up to 150 meters). They are light, and mobile and are easily adaptable to terrain and are effective against all types of tanks except against the frontal armor which is specially reinforced. The bazookas, the "scourge of the tanks" are effective against all models except the reinforced parts. They are lighter and more mobile than the trench mortars. Both weapons are very accurate and easy to manage.
 - c. Hand grenades are effective against the weak parts of a tank, especially the roof and the floor. A special method is to place a grenade in the projecting rear part of the turret which will either be blown off or will lose its power of movement.
 - d. Tanks and assault artillery can engage in profitable duels with their enemy counterparts. In such a case it is necessary to fall upon the flank or back of the tank where it is the weakest. The frontal assault is the least favorable since all modern tanks are fortified with specially reinforced frontal armor, and the construction of the tank makes the vertical stroke difficult.

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- 3 -

9. Disposition of defensive weapons. Weapons which are employed in the front lines during the enemy artillery bombardment suffer serious losses and at the critical moment are of no use or can not be moved to the decisive spots. It is most necessary for adequate defense against tanks to furnish each group with a mobile reserve, as well as to organize each group in sufficient depth to withstand losses.
- a. The trench mortars have to be kept in protected spaces or in bunkers and are utilized when the artillery fire is withdrawn to the rear. The majority of these weapons should be retained as mobile reserve against the tanks. Their positions ought to be constructed so that firing in all directions is possible. The reserve ought to be employed only in the direction of the greatest danger and if the bazookas have not succeeded in stopping the attack.
 - b. The heavy pieces (76.2 mm) should act as a reserve in the event of a breakthrough, especially to protect the rear.
 - c. Those pieces fired from tractors ought to fire only a few rounds from one position; a frequent change of position is indispensable. The tractors ought to remain near the artillery pieces. Protected positions ought to be constructed for those pieces which are fired from the tractors. In urgent cases an open position, which is protected from splinters, can be used.
 - d. Combat positions ought not to be chosen too near the route of the attack, since the weapons will be firing on the strong frontal armor of the tanks which is the least vulnerable spot. Instead positions ought to be taken along the sides where the weak lateral armor can be hit. The pieces ought to be placed in pairs in order to increase the quickness of fire and the eventual losses of the enemy. Choice of defense positions should be governed by the nature of the terrain. Natural obstacles, such as rocks, water and trees, limit the movement of tanks and make defense easier.
 - e. Obstructions ought to be constructed along the route of the attack near the artillery positions so that the tanks can be fired upon from close range. These obstructions should be constantly watched by infantrymen to see that they are not destroyed by mines. If the infantry detachments are armed with anti-tank guns they can at the opportune moment engage in combat with the enemy tanks while they are embroiled in the obstructions.
 - f. Mines should be placed all along the route, particularly in open places. In defiles and glades eight or ten mines make an adequate obstruction.
 - g. The defense columns ought to be concentrated and employed as entire units. Separate arms ought not to be employed except behind the front as protection for command posts, artillery posts, supply dumps, etc. This collaboration with other defense weapons, as well as the preparation of several reserve positions, assures the full employment of the bazooka at the proper time.
 - h. When choosing a position of fire it is necessary to take into account:
 - (1) a good field of fire, at least 150 meters if possible in several directions
 - (2) protection from enemy fire and observation
 - (3) position favorable for the managing and employment of weapons
 - (4) proximity to reserves
 - i. Preparations for combat should consist of the following:
 - (1) All objects which impede the management, the opening of fire and the loading of weapons should be removed.
 - (2) In clearing the field of fire it is necessary to consider the arc of the route of the projectile.
 - (3) The position of fire should be carefully camouflaged, but not in a manner to impede fire.
 - (4) The following distances should be measured and marked on the terrain:
 - 150 meters greatest distance for immobile targets
 - 120 meters greatest distance for mobile targets
 - 75 meters half of the greatest distance

- j. In order to obtain the greatest effect with the minimum of ammunition, fire ought to be opened against those targets which are most dangerous for the weapons themselves, or against those targets which are dangerous from the point of view of protecting support. The position ought to be changed as soon as the enemy has discovered the first position, when its effectiveness has been lessened because of enemy fire, or if the change of position offers great advantages.
 - k. The chief of the group chooses the positions of fire and of reserve, but in the course of battle when the various groups become isolated they must choose and change their positions in accordance with the situation. During the defense the commander's place is regularly with the most important arm, the activity of which he directs personally. The chief of the group indicates to the isolated weapons their targets and coordinates the fire. Since close contact with the leader of the group is difficult during combat conditions, it is necessary that his instructions be complete at the beginning so that the gunners can act independently if the need arises. The opening of fire ought generally to be left to the discretion of the gunners. The chief of the group should keep close watch on the use of munition and order the bringing up of extra supplies should they be needed. He is responsible for the cooperation of his group with the other defensive arms against tanks and gunners.
10. During the combat the bazooka group should observe and hold their position in coordination with the other defensive arms. Contact with the enemy will be maintained through patrols who observe the route of march and the strength and the tanks of the enemy and who make a report from time to time. The use of bazookas is calculated as a surprise, since positions of this sort can not be held against an attack prepared in advance. If it is realized that the enemy is preparing an attack against the position it must be evacuated. One or two patrols will be left behind with the task of fighting the infantry and the engineers who remove the mines. The groups of bazookas will be employed in the attack as defense against the enemy counter-attacks.
11. Smoke camouflage for defense against tanks
- a. Smoke will be employed as defense against tanks in order to stop a tank, in order to prevent point-blank fire from an immobilized tank or to throw off the fire, and to isolate a tank from others or from the guns which are supporting its advance.
 - b. When smoke is employed, it is hoped to create a sort of blindness so that the tank comes completely into the cloud of smoke. The blindness comes as such a surprise that the opponents can fire profitably at once before the tank can recover itself and take counter-measures. A tank in operation can be hoped to take in so much smoke that the equipment breaks down. Under the protection of the smoke the men of the defense can come close to the tank and destroy it by explosive charges.

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